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Chairperson: Mrs. Juul ..... (Norway)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 82 to 97 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairperson: We shall now begin our thematic discussion on the issue of nuclear weapons. As we have no guest speakers today, I shall give the floor to delegations wishing to make an intervention on the specific subject under consideration.

Mr. Kahiluoto (Finland): I speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates — Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia — and the European Free Trade Association country, Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

Last year we expressed our considerable disappointment at the lack of non-proliferation and disarmament language in the World Summit Outcome Document. The EU also regrets that last year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was unable to agree on a substantive final document to address the most pressing challenges to the Treaty. However, we reiterate our support for a universal non-proliferation regime, supported by a strong system of international safeguards and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The EU believes that the prevention of nuclear proliferation and the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the NPT are essential for global peace and security. The NPT is the cornerstone of that regime, based on three mutually reinforcing pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We believe it is as important today as it was when first agreed, 35 years ago. The European Union will continue to preserve the integrity of the NPT in promoting all the objectives laid down in the Treaty in a structured and balanced manner, as identified and recorded in the EU Common Position that we adopted prior to the Review Conference, on 25 April 2005.

The European Union continues to support the decisions and resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, as well as the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and will bear in mind the current situation. We note also that the final report, which includes the programme of work, adopted by consensus at the 2005 NPT Review Conference, constitutes a reference for the future review process, in which the EU will engage. The EU stands by its Common Position agreed on 25 April 2005 relating to the NPT Review Conference. We also continue to work towards universal accession to the

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NPT, and call on those States not yet party to it to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States.

The European Union looks forward to the first Preparatory Committee meeting for the next NPT Review Conference; that meeting, next year, should take place in Vienna. We are committed to contributing actively to its successful outcome. In our view, the next NPT review cycle will have to produce tangible results that build on all three pillars of the NPT in order to reinforce the regime.

The EU is guided by its commitment to uphold, implement and strengthen the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements. Meeting the challenge of the risks associated with proliferation is a key element in the EU's external relations. The EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction commits the Union to act with resolve, using all instruments and policies at its disposal, to prevent, deter, halt and, where possible, eliminate proliferation programmes of concern worldwide. We are also committed to implementing our Common Position of 17 November 2003 on the universalization and reinforcement of multilateral agreements in the field of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

In this year of the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Statute, the EU reaffirms its full support for the work of that unique and indispensable organization, which pursues the same objectives as we do. The IAEA is the world's focal point for peaceful nuclear cooperation and nuclear safety, and it has an indispensable, global role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and countering new threats of nuclear terrorism. The three pillars of the IAEA Statute — verification, safety and technology — have been strengthened where necessary, and remain solid in the face of their respective challenges.

The European Union considers the universal adoption and implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements, and additional protocols to them, a prerequisite for an effective and credible safeguards system. Together, the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and the additional protocol constitute the current IAEA verification standard. We strongly support strengthening of the IAEA's safeguards. We consider adherence to them an essential means of verifying fulfilment of States parties' obligations under article III of the NPT.

Additional protocols have been in force in all EU member States since May 2004. We urge all States that have not yet done so to sign an additional protocol without further delay. We also urge all States that have signed, but not yet brought into force, their respective safeguards agreements and additional protocols, to do so without further delay. We believe that the universalization of the additional protocols would strengthen the international non-proliferation regime and contribute to the security of all States. In addition, it would greatly increase the confidence necessary for international cooperation in the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The EU's support for the IAEA extends to very practical cooperation, giving immediate and practical implementation to some elements of the EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Through our joint action, we support IAEA activities in the areas of nuclear security and verification. IAEA projects supported by the EU aim at strengthening national legislative and regulatory infrastructure for the implementation of international instruments in the areas of nuclear security and control of nuclear and other radioactive materials, and strengthening States' capabilities for detection of, and response to, illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials.

The European Union supports the suspension of nuclear cooperation with a State when the IAEA is unable to give sufficient assurances that that State's nuclear programme is intended exclusively for peaceful purposes in line with its international commitments. The suspension should continue until the Agency is able to provide those assurances. We also call for strengthening of the role of the Security Council, as the arbiter of international peace and security, in order that it can take appropriate action in the event of non-compliance with NPT obligations.

We recognize that serious nuclear proliferation events have occurred since the end of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The EU strongly condemns the announcement of a test of a nuclear explosive device by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is unacceptable. The EU is working in close cooperation with the international community for a decisive international response to that provocation.

Defying the Security Council statement of 6 October 2006, the concerns of its neighbours and the calls of the international community, that test profoundly jeopardizes peace and stability in the region and beyond, and represents a clear threat to international peace and security. It is a flagrant breach of the December 1991 North-South Denuclearization Declaration. Furthermore, it violates Security Council resolution 1695 (2006), unanimously adopted after the launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of ballistic missiles. The resolution underlined the need for that country to show restraint and refrain from any action that might aggravate tension.

The European Union strongly urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to announce immediately that it will refrain from any further tests of a nuclear device; publicly renounce nuclear weapons and return immediately and without preconditions to the Six-Party Talks, and work towards implementation of the Joint Statement of September 2005; and, in particular, to verifiably abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes. The European Union urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to compliance with the NPT and IAEA safeguards obligations. It further calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The EU condemns the provocative missile test launches performed by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in July, and calls upon that country to re-establish the moratorium on long-range missile testing.

The European Union shares the concern over Iran's nuclear programme expressed by the IAEA Board of Governors and the Security Council. We welcome the adoption of Security Council resolution 1696 (2006), and call upon Iran to respond positively and swiftly to the demands of the international community in implementing it, in particular by suspending all its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development, with such action verified by the IAEA, and to take all the steps required by the IAEA in accordance with the resolution.

The European Union reiterates the statement made in London on 6 October by the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, Margaret Beckett, on behalf of the Foreign Ministers of China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United States and the High Representative of the EU, expressing deep disappointment that Iran is not prepared to suspend its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, as required by the IAEA Board of Governors and made mandatory by Security Council resolution 1696 (2006), and their decision to consult on measures under Article 41, Chapter VII, of the Charter, as envisaged in that resolution.

The European Union continues to attribute great importance to the fight against terrorism, keeping in mind the tragic events of recent years. It strongly supports all measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring nuclear, biological or chemical weapons and related materials, radiological materials and their means of delivery — measures such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, adopted in 2005, and those agreed within the G8 Global Partnership, the Krakow Proliferation Security Initiative and the Global Threat Reduction Initiative.

The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, IAEA safeguards agreements with additional protocols and a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, or other nuclear explosive devices, could reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism by curbing the possibilities of an illegal diversion of fissile material.

The European Union welcomes and appreciates the IAEA activities aimed at preventing and combating nuclear terrorism. The IAEA plays a vital role in that area, particularly through its Nuclear Security Fund, to which the European Union is the largest donor this year.

Effective physical protection is of paramount importance for preventing illicit trafficking and ensuring protection against nuclear terrorism and other malicious acts. The European Union welcomed the strengthening of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material at the Diplomatic Conference in 2005, in Vienna. The EU calls on all States that have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention and its amendment as soon as possible. Likewise, the EU welcomed the adoption in 2005 of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and hopes that all States will sign, ratify and implement it as soon as possible.

The European Union stresses the importance of the safety and security of radioactive sources and the role of the Code of Conduct adopted by the IAEA General Conference in 2003. EU member States have informed the IAEA Director General in writing that they are committed to following the Code in accordance with the European Directive on the control of high-activity sealed radioactive sources and orphan sources. The EU calls on all countries to declare their political commitment to the Code and to implement the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

The world must be united in a common endeavour to strengthen the non-proliferation regime by closing existing loopholes. The EU is committed to strong national and internationally coordinated export controls to complement our obligations under the NPT. EU member States are working towards making the additional protocol a condition of supply for nuclear exports. The European Union supports the strengthening of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) guidelines, and urges the NSG and the Zangger Committee to share their experience on export controls to meet new non-proliferation challenges.

The European Union supports the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the NPT, and has welcomed the reduction of strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons and their delivery systems since the end of the cold war. We stress the need for an overall reduction of the global stockpile of nuclear weapons in accordance with article VI of the NPT, in particular by those with the largest arsenals. In that context, we recognize the application of the principle of irreversibility to guide all measures in the field of nuclear disarmament and arms control, as a contribution to the maintenance and enforcement of international peace, security and stability, taking those conditions into account. We are pursuing efforts to secure transparency as a voluntary confidence-building measure. The European Union also calls on all States concerned to take appropriate practical measures in order to reduce the risk of accidental nuclear war.

In that context, the EU highlights the importance of the Declarations made by the Presidents of Russia and of the United States in 1991 and 1992 on unilateral reductions in their stocks of non-strategic nuclear weapons, and calls on all States with non-strategic nuclear weapons to include them in their general arms control and disarmament processes, with a view to the reduction and elimination of those weapons. The EU recognizes the importance, from the point of view of nuclear disarmament, of the programmes for the destruction and elimination of nuclear weapons and the elimination of fissile material, as defined under the G8 Global Partnership.

The EU notes that the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which reduced the strategic nuclear weapons arsenal of the United States and of Russia to 6,000 accountable warheads, is due to expire in 2009. We also note that the Moscow Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions, which limits each side to no more than 1,700 to 2,200 deployed strategic nuclear warheads, will expire on 31 December 2012. The EU welcomes the reductions in deployed nuclear weapons which START and the Moscow Treaty have brought about, and stresses the need for more progress in structurally reducing those nuclear arsenals through appropriate follow-on processes.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is an essential part of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and the EU attaches the utmost importance to its entry into force at the earliest possible date. The EU welcomes its ratification by Viet Nam, one of the countries listed in annex 2, and continues to call on all States, particularly annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay and without conditions. This year's tenth anniversary of the adoption of the CTBT by the General Assembly reminds us all of the need to redouble our efforts to complete the outstanding ratifications required for the Treaty's entry into force. The EU believes that a legally binding prohibition of nuclear-weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, as well as a credible verification regime, are vital. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, we urge all States to abide by a moratorium and to refrain from any actions that are contrary to the obligations and provisions of the Treaty.

The EU attaches great importance to the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), and actively supports the work of the Special Representative of the States which have ratified the Treaty charged with promoting universal accession to the Treaty. With the launching this year of its Joint Action, the EU extends its support for the CTBTO Preparatory Commission to very practical cooperation, thus giving immediate and practical implementation to

some elements of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The Joint Action is designed to support CTBTO Preparatory Commission activities in training and capacity-building for verification. The EU also welcomes the additional and complementary benefits that the CTBT International Monitoring System brings in supporting the early detection of potentially tsunamigenic earthquakes.

The EU attaches clear priority to the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as a means to strengthen disarmament and non-proliferation. That was made clear in the Common Position that the European Union adopted on 25 April 2005 relating to the NPT Review Conference, which it stands by. We are ready to promote the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), and support the start of negotiations next spring. We are encouraged by the new momentum on starting the FMCT negotiations, and welcome the fact that the United States has contributed to that momentum at the Conference on Disarmament through the submission of a draft treaty and a draft mandate. We note that the FMCT negotiation mandate proposed by the United States is broadly in line with our position on the FMCT, and that nothing can be precluded from the negotiations. This opportunity should be seized, and was upheld at the Conference on Disarmament by the active participation of delegations during the FMCT focused debate, the presence of experts, the presentation of papers and the participation of the IAEA. Pending the entry into force of an FMCT, the EU calls on all States to declare and uphold a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We welcome the action of those four States that have decreed such moratoriums.

The EU is supportive of pursuing consideration of the issue of security assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT. In that context, the EU recalls the relevant aspects of decision 2 adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and bears in mind the current situation. Positive and negative security assurances can play an important role. They can serve both as an incentive to forgo the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and as a deterrent.

The EU calls on all States in the Middle East to make that region into an effectively verifiable zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, in keeping with the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

The EU continues to attach great importance to the development of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the regions concerned, as elaborated in the guidelines adopted by the Disarmament Commission at its 1999 substantive session. Nuclear-weapon-free zones enhance regional and global peace and security, and are a means to promote nuclear disarmament, stability and confidence. The EU welcomes and encourages the signature and ratification by the nuclear-weapon States of the relevant protocols to the nuclear-weapon-free zones, following the completion of necessary consultations. We hope that outstanding issues concerning nuclear-weapon-free zones can be resolved through full consultations in accordance with the Disarmament Commission guidelines and with the agreement of all parties involved.

We also call on nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm, in the appropriate forums, existing nuclear assurances noted by Security Council resolution 984 (1995), and to sign and ratify the relevant protocols on nuclear-weapon-free zones, drawn up following the requisite consultations, recognizing that treaty-based security assurances are available to such zones.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): Today, as we focus our thoughts on the theme of nuclear weapons, we do so against a grim backdrop of multiple setbacks in recent years. The failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to produce a consensus outcome was a huge disappointment. Disagreement on a common disarmament and non-proliferation agenda at the 2005 World Summit resulted in a missed opportunity. As if those matters were not enough, the Conference on Disarmament — the world's sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations — has for years been unable to adopt a programme of work. Similarly, its deliberative counterpart, the Disarmament Commission, has remained hobbled by the deep divide among its members.

Clearly, then, these are not the best of times. But can we afford to continue along this path for too long without bringing upon ourselves the most unsavoury consequences? Logic would point to the contrary. Something, obviously, must be done. But such actions can only flow from the appropriate political will.

As we mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), we recall how long and hard we worked to put it in place. Yet, regrettably, to date we do not have sufficient ratifications for its entry into force. Without that Treaty, let me unequivocally reiterate, the world will be a far less safe place. We therefore appeal to the remaining 11 annex 2 States whose ratification is essential for entry into force to ratify it at the soonest. We urge all others to observe a moratorium on nuclear testing in the meantime.

In that context, I wish to add that Bangladesh authorities have expressed deep concern over the recent testing by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We believe that such actions exacerbate the already tense international situation, and serve no positive purpose. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to instead return to talks.

It is not that our efforts have always been futile. There have been occasions when we have discerned glimmers of hope, or even brighter prospects. We saw a modicum of achievements in 1995 and 2000. Those must not be weakened. The price we will pay for reneging on our commitments and obligations will be too high. We must build on those successes. We must implement what we have agreed upon. Particular mention must be made of the 13 practical steps adopted by the 2000 Review Conference for the systematic and progressive implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We are also heartened by the modest progress made in regard to the application of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, with 17 States having signed additional protocols and eight signing comprehensive safeguards agreements. There is also the ever so slight shift in focus in the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament that occurred this year, which we encourage. I am referring to the work towards an agreed schedule, for the first time in a decade, with particular efforts to reflect the security concerns of all States. The momentum generated must be capitalized upon. The Conference on Disarmament must resume its substantive work in line with the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith, and bring to a conclusion, negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, under strict and effective international control.

The best methodology to achieve disarmament and non-proliferation goals is to strive for them in a multilateral framework. That can be free, or be seen to be free, of suspicions that oftentimes shroud bilateral, or even plurilateral, approaches. Meaningful and effective multilateralism in the disarmament machinery would entail activating two fronts: the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission. In the Conference on Disarmament, that could be achieved through the resumption of negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material. We welcome the positive developments to that end, and the contributions of major nuclear-weapon Powers, including, and in particular, the United States. On the Disarmament Commission front, we need to agree on the agenda of the substantive session, at the same time preparing ourselves to give a boost to the upcoming 2007 meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the next NPT review conference.

It is evident that nuclear-weapon States have demonstrated little will, or progress, towards disarmament. True, some old warheads have been destroyed. But it appears that that is owed to aspirations for modernization rather than the desire to conform to any treaty obligations. Moreover, precision is being added to stockpiles, and newer types of weapons are being developed. Needless to say, those factors enhance the propensity for use and have serious and adverse destabilizing ramifications. There could be a temptation to indulge in surgical strikes, which are presumed to be without excessive collateral damage. Nuclear war-fighting and the aim of winning could become a theoretical possibility.

Everything must be done to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-State actors. If their acquisition is seen to be a means to satisfy security needs, and is perceived to add to political or even military clout, it will become attractive for those who have the capabilities to acquire the same. In other words, if some have such weapons that are seen to add to their power, others will want them also. That is incontrovertible logic. For instance, if such weapons

are present in any region, others will seek to deter those who possess them with similar capabilities. Nuclear neighbours do not inspire non-violent predilections, such as voluntary renunciation of weapons. Those are fundamental patterns of human and State behaviour that have remained constant throughout history. If there are States that genuinely feel they need nuclear weapons to enhance their sense of security, we will have failed. If there be one such, soon there will be another and yet another.

Just as justice should not only be done, but should also be seen to be done, our regimes must ensure not only that States are secure, but that they also feel that they are secure. Above all, the regimes must be fair, just and equitable, and must be perceived to be so. Even in the nuclear age, military behaviour is no different from the tactical conventional wisdom, as in the sergeant's famous exhortation to his troops: "Have faith in God, my boys, but keep your powder dry."

In the face of these realities, it is with a sense of pride that Bangladesh can point to its own impeccable disarmament and non-proliferation credentials. We have consciously and unconditionally opted to remain non-nuclear. We were the first annex 2 nation in South Asia to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We are also party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and have concluded safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency, including the additional protocols. Those facts are, we believe, adequate testimony to our unflinching and constitutional commitment to the twin goals of disarmament and non-proliferation.

We have adopted the positions that I have described because we have concluded that our safety and security lie in doing so. But our fear is that in the current international climate all may not see it that way. There may be those who extrapolate that their security is buttressed by their acquisition of nuclear weapons, because their perceived sources of threat have them. Our challenge is to persuade them, and persuade all others, that possession of such weapons of mass destruction can never enhance safety and security in the long run, and that till such time as we rid our world of these weapons humanity will remain hostage to their use, or the fear of their use.

Despite the history of setbacks, we have no option but to continue our endeavours to achieve our aims, even though at times they appear unattainable. As a mighty poet said, "a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?"

Mr. Shi Zhonjun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Promoting the process of nuclear disarmament and reducing the danger of nuclear proliferation are of great significance to improving the international security situation and maintaining world peace. The international community must intensify its efforts in the following aspects.

First, nuclear-weapon States should commit to the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and conclude an international legal instrument at an early date.

Secondly, nuclear disarmament should be a just and reasonable process of gradual reduction towards a lower balance. The two countries possessing the largest nuclear arsenals bear special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament. They should further reduce their nuclear arsenals in a verifiable and irreversible manner, in order to create conditions for achieving the ultimate goal of complete and thorough nuclear disarmament. Any nuclear disarmament measure should follow the guidelines of maintaining global strategic balance and stability and undiminished security for all.

Thirdly, until the goal of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons is achieved, nuclear-weapon States should commit themselves to no first use of nuclear weapons, and undertake unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. The international community should conclude an international legal instrument on negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States at an early date.

Fourthly, the Conference on Disarmament should reach agreement on its programme of work as soon as possible, in order to establish ad hoc committees and start substantial work on such issues as nuclear disarmament, security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States, the fissile material cut-off treaty and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Fifthly, efforts should be made to promote the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and until that happens the moratorium on nuclear testing should be maintained.

China has always stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and has always been committed to promoting the international nuclear disarmament process. As a nuclear-weapon State, China has never evaded its nuclear disarmament responsibilities and obligations, and has persistently exercised the utmost restraint on the scale and development of its nuclear weapons. China's nuclear arsenal has always been kept at the minimum level necessary for self-defence.

China unconditionally adheres to the policy of no first use of nuclear weapons, and of not using or threatening to use them against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. China has declared that it will provide negative and positive security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States.

China supports the negotiation and conclusion of a multilateral non-discriminatory, internationally and effectively verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty, according to the mandate contained in the Shannon report, on the basis of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament. China is carefully studying the draft treaty suggested by the United States at the Conference on Disarmament.

China firmly supports the CTBT, and spares no effort in promoting its early entry into force. China will continue to honour its moratorium commitment before the Treaty's entry into force.

China respects and supports the efforts by relevant countries and regions to voluntarily establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of consultations among themselves, and has signed to that end all the protocols to nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties that are open for signature.

Next year will usher in another round of the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). China firmly supports the process, and hopes that all parties will honour their Treaty commitments and pursue a constructive approach to ensure the success of the review conference. China also hopes that the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee will have a good start.

Concerning the nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I will quote the following statement by the Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of China:

"On October 9 the Democratic People's Republic of Korea flagrantly conducted a nuclear test in disregard of the common opposition of the international community. The Chinese Government is firmly opposed to that act. To bring about denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and oppose nuclear proliferation is the firm and consistent stance of the Chinese Government. China strongly urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to honour its commitment to denuclearization, stop all moves that may further worsen the situation and return to the Six-Party Talks.

"To safeguard peace and stability in the North-East Asian region serves the interests of all parties involved. The Chinese Government calls on all parties concerned to be cool-headed in response and to persist in seeking a peaceful solution through consultation and dialogue. China will continue to make every effort towards that goal."

Given the current situation, it is of practical significance and urgency to further promote the nuclear disarmament process. China is ready to work with all countries to actively explore effective ways to achieve complete and thorough nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Bouchaara (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco welcomes this thematic debate on nuclear issues. The risks of nuclear weapons proliferation are a major challenge to the international community. These risks must be closely and objectively studied and analysed. We note, not without some surprise, that, more than 15 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the ideological and strategic confrontation between the blocs, there are still about 27,000 nuclear weapons in the world, 12,000 of which are actively deployed. It must be recognized that these figures are spine-chilling and unlikely to reassure the international community.

The Kingdom of Morocco, deeply committed to the virtues of dialogue and cooperation, believes that only a strategy of small steps, based on the gradual achievement of practical goals, will allow us to progress towards disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. That is why it is vital to reinforce the existing international instruments — in particular, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). At the same time, we must bring about greater

adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Only its effective and complete implementation will prevent the modernization of existing stocks and indeed the emergence of new nuclear Powers. The CTBT is therefore a fundamental instrument for international security that must be respected in the spirit and the letter.

Effective action geared towards tangible results will require a balanced approach to nuclear issues. In this regard, we should recall that the NPT is based on a balance which must be scrupulously upheld: the obligation on nuclear Powers to work towards general and complete disarmament; the recognized rights to the peaceful use of nuclear energy; and the requirement for non-nuclear States to fully respect their nuclear non-proliferation commitments. This balance, founded on the apportionment of rights and obligations among nuclear and non-nuclear States, must be respected. In turn, we should recall the relevance of the Final Documents of the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences, which, unfortunately, have only been partially and insufficiently implemented, in particular, with regard to the 1995 decision on the Middle East.

Among the new challenges facing the international community, we should single out the risks of nuclear terrorism. One can only shudder to imagine the terrible consequences of a terrorist attack on a large urban centre with the use of nuclear weapons or components. This challenge must be studied with seriousness and responsibility. The adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) reflects the resolve of the international community to act cooperatively in order to address it.

The continuing proliferation of ballistic missile systems that can be the means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction is another growing challenge to the international community. The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation is the primary multilateral instrument to combat the proliferation of ballistic missiles. It has allowed us to rectify an obvious deficiency.

Since 22 June, the Kingdom of Morocco has had the honour of chairing the group of States subscribing to the Hague Code. During its mandate my country will spare no effort to promote the objectives of the Code and work towards its universality and thus reduce the risks of ballistic missile proliferation. Currently 125 States subscribe to the Hague Code. That is a significant result, which should be consolidated by making those States that do not yet subscribe to it aware of its unique nature and its vocation to contribute to international security.

At their meeting in Vienna in June the Code's signatory States decided not to submit a draft resolution during the current session of the First Committee. However, the Moroccan delegation plans to take the opportunity during the work of the First Committee to continue its informal consultations and awareness-raising efforts in order to facilitate effective implementation of all the provisions of the Hague Code, thus increasing support for it within the international community, which is our main concern.

Mr. Paulsen (Norway): It is conventional wisdom that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are interlinked. But sometimes conventional wisdom is correct. It continues to be true that a dismantled and destroyed nuclear weapon cannot be proliferated.

All States have a responsibility to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Member States have taken a number of non-proliferation measures at national level. Export control regimes have been developed, and Norway is an active stakeholder in these regimes. However, the guidelines are not universally implemented. So we call upon all States to implement effective national export control measures. In doing so, they will better positioned to benefit from peaceful nuclear cooperation.

Apart from the export control regimes, the international community is called upon by Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) to do its utmost to prevent terrorists gaining access to weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, we call on all States to ratify and implement the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, adopted by the General Assembly last year.

Let me also underline that adequate physical protection of nuclear material is of crucial importance. More efforts are needed to convert nuclear research reactors in the civilian sector from being fuelled by highly enriched uranium to being fuelled by low-enriched uranium. We cannot allow civilian highly enriched uranium to fall into the hands of terrorists.

I reiterate Norway's firm support for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) comprehensive safeguards and the additional protocols.

As Finland emphasized on behalf of the European Union in its brief statement this morning, Norway also continues to work towards universal accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

While all States have a shared responsibility to contribute to non-proliferation, obviously the nuclear-weapon States have an additional responsibility in the field of nuclear constraint and disarmament. A range of efforts can be envisaged. Let me mention a few.

First, some nuclear-weapon States are more transparent than others about nuclear issues. We encourage increased transparency across the board. More needs to be done, but many nuclear weapons have been destroyed since 1990. We appeal to the nuclear-weapon States to take credit for this by being more transparent about their nuclear programmes.

Secondly, it is our hope that the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty will be renewed and strengthened on the basis of the principle of irreversibility and verification.

Thirdly, negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear-weapons purposes should start immediately. Pending that, all nuclear-weapon States are called upon to declare or reconfirm moratoriums on the production of such material. Military excess weapons-grade fissile material should be reduced, by converting it into nuclear fuel for civilian purposes. In that way, disarmament can contribute to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Fourthly, the relevant States should make every effort to enable the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to enter into force. In the meantime, we expect a full moratorium on nuclear test explosions to be observed. In that respect, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is moving in a very wrong and totally unacceptable direction.

Fifthly, there is a certain alert time between the decision point and the trigger point as regards the use of a nuclear weapon. It is the view of my delegation that the longer that alert time is, the fewer the chances of an accidental nuclear exchange.

Sixthly, there is widespread support for the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Yet only one such zone has entered into force with the protocols ratified by nuclear-weapon States. We must explore, with the active participation of the nuclear-weapon States, how the other zones can realize their potential.

Finally, Under-Secretary-General Tanaka referred yesterday to a certain fatigue in the international community with regard to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. He is probably right, for a number of reasons, which I will not discuss now. But the wake-up call last Sunday was loud and frightening. The urgency that we now sense should inspire us to reach agreement on more resolutions and decisions than we are used to in the First Committee. Resolutions do not save the world, but they are — at least normally — a valuable contribution.

Mr. Mine (Japan): In view of the time constraints, I shall address only important items.

I start with nuclear disarmament. After the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the United States and the Russian Federation started to engage in the limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons. However, according to some unofficial data, it is estimated that about 16,000 nuclear weapons remain. We recall that States are encouraged to take further steps leading to nuclear disarmament under article VI of the NPT.

Japan commends the efforts by the United States and the Russian Federation to reduce nuclear arsenals, in accordance with the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, the Moscow Treaty, and encourages them to undertake nuclear arms reductions beyond those provided for by the Treaty, stressing the importance of the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and increased transparency. In that context, Japan will pay close attention to the consultations between the United States and the Russian Federation on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which expires in 2009. We hope that the other nuclear-weapon States will make similar or further efforts to reduce nuclear arsenals, in accordance with their commitments made at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences.

The nuclear-weapon States should further reduce the operational status of nuclear-weapons systems in ways that promote international stability and security. In addition, diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies is essential to minimize the risk that the weapons will ever be used, and to facilitate the process of their total elimination.

Universalization of the NPT is equally important. Japan appeals to the non-NPT States that possess nuclear weapons to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States without delay and without conditions.

A fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) is the most realistic logical step for the next multilateral legal disarmament measure. An FMCT is often described primarily as a non-proliferation issue. Nevertheless, under it, States possessing fissile material for nuclear weapons would be, at a minimum, obliged to cap fissile material production, which is not an explicit legal obligation for the nuclear-weapon States under the NPT. Consequently, regardless of the treatment of existing stocks, an FMCT would provide the effect of irreversibility, since States possessing fissile material for nuclear weapons would no longer be permitted to produce such material. Only such capping can lead to the reduction and subsequent elimination of fissile material for nuclear weapons. Therefore, an FMCT is also significant as a nuclear disarmament measure, which would enhance the disarmament aspect of the NPT.

In the focused debates at the Conference on Disarmament this year, discussions took place on all aspects of an FMCT, including definition, scope, stocks and verification, almost exhausting the time allocated in the formal and informal meetings. Furthermore, although there are a range of opinions about the whole Conference schedule, it is significant that throughout this year's session no country — including the nuclear-weapon States — expressed opposition to the establishment of an ad hoc committee to negotiate an FMCT in the Conference.

I re-emphasize here what I concluded in my statement at one of the final meetings of the Conference: while further deliberations are required within the Conference on all four major agenda items, only an FMCT has reached the stage of the establishment of an ad hoc committee for negotiations. Once again, Japan calls for the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament.

I would like to speak again about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, because that is such an important item. It announced on 9 October that it had conducted a nuclear test, and a relevant authority in Japan detected a seismic wave with an abnormal wave pattern. That act by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, combined with its build-up of ballistic missiles that may be capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, is a grave problem and causes extremely deep concern. It is a serious challenge to Japan's security, and is totally unacceptable. Japan firmly protests against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and categorically denounces its act.

The nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea poses a grave threat to the peace and security not only of Japan, but also of East Asia and the entire international community. This constitutes a serious challenge to the NPT regime, and not only violates the Japan-Democratic People's Republic of Korea Pyongyang Declaration and the Six-Party Talks Joint Statement, but also disregards the spirit of Security Council resolution 1695 (2006) and the 6 October statement (S/PRST/2006/41) by the President of the Council.

For that reason, Japan put forward this issue in the Security Council on 9 October and has addressed it in the First Committee, together with the rest of the United Nations Members. As a Member State of the United Nations, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is obliged to faithfully implement Security Council resolution 1695 (2006). Japan once again strongly demands that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea fully implement the Six-Party Talks Joint Statement, in which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea committed itself to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes and to returning to the NPT and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards at an early date.

In relation to the issue of Iran's nuclear programme, the confidence of the international community, which is a fundamental requirement when conducting sensitive nuclear activities, such as enrichment and reprocessing, has not been restored.

Japan strongly urges Iran to comply fully with Security Council resolution 1696 (2006) by promptly suspending all enrichment-related activities and returning to the negotiation process.

Japan has long supported the efforts to negotiate a treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. Japan regards the signing on 8 September of this Treaty in Semipalatinsk by the five central Asian countries as an effort to strengthen the peace and stability of the region, as well as nuclear non-proliferation. At the

same time, as stipulated in the principles and guidelines in the 1999 Disarmament Commission report, it is important that nuclear-weapon States be consulted during the negotiation of each treaty and its relevant protocols establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone, in order to facilitate their signature and ratification of the relevant protocols to the treaty. In this regard, Japan takes note of the expressed readiness of the five Central Asian countries to continue consultations on some points of the Treaty. Japan will pay close attention to future consultations among the countries concerned, so as to ensure the Treaty's contribution to the peace and stability of the region.

Finally, I would like to introduce a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament. Last year, we redrafted our previous draft resolution in stronger, yet more concise, terms. That draft resolution, entitled "Renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", was not only adopted with votes in favour by 168 countries, the highest number since submission of the original draft resolution, but also gained broad support from countries of differing positions. This demonstrates that, despite the two failures at both the NPT Review Conference and the United Nations Summit last year, common ground exists in the international community for specific guidance in promoting nuclear disarmament.

This year, in addition to the draft text's emphasizing the importance of next year's start of the new NPT review process, language has been added calling for the immediate commencement of substantive work to its fullest at the Conference on Disarmament, in view of this year's positive development, as well as expressing deep concern over the statement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it had conducted a nuclear test.

Japan hopes that all countries, including the nuclear-weapon States, regardless of any differences in position, will unite and support our draft resolution, with a view to achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Streuli (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced that on 9 October 2006 it had carried out an underground nuclear test, despite the Security Council presidential statement of 6 October and the international community's many appeals for moderation. Switzerland condemns the test, which runs counter to the international community's nuclear n proliferation efforts and threatens the security of region and beyond. In fact, it could unleash an a race, whose consequences could escape our control.

The test also seriously affects attempts universalize the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-I Treaty (CTBT) and its implementation. Such a tes contrary to the spirit of the CTBT, which has b signed by 176 States and ratified by 135. Switzerl calls upon the Democratic People's Republic of Ko to sign and ratify the CTBT as soon as possible. O number of occasions, Switzerland has called upon accede again to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Tre (NPT), from which it withdrew in 2003.

Switzerland is convinced that a peaceful solut to the nuclear problem in the Korean peninsula sho be sought within the framework of the Six-Party Tal My country calls upon all parties concerned in process to show a spirit of consensus, which wo allow it to restart quickly.

Switzerland supports all multilateral disarmam and armaments control efforts leading to concrete verifiable results. It regards the NPT as the only lega binding global instrument designed to promote n proliferation and nuclear disarmament. It is in sense an essential tool for international peace stability.

As we are in the initial phase of the new revi cycle, Switzerland would stress that the pres emphasis on nuclear proliferation should not lead our overlooking the other two pillars of the N nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nucl energy. In my country's opinion, it is essential respect the compromise that led to the conclusion the NPT — namely, the renunciation of nucl weapons by States in exchange for a commitment the nuclear Powers to pursue complete nucl disarmament. While the great majority of States part without nuclear weapons have respected commitment, and have not acquired such weapons, call upon the nuclear-weapon States to continue th progressive efforts to fulfil their disarmam obligations.

There has undoubtedly been some posit progress since the 2000 Review Conference. T Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) has to considerable reductions in strategic nucl weapons, and is a welcome step in the right directi

But Switzerland believes that, to be credible, all such nuclear disarmament efforts, bilateral or unilateral, should incorporate the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verification.

On non-strategic nuclear weapons, the balance sheet is mixed. We notice that, unfortunately, there is a big gap between unilateral promises and actual achievements.

Switzerland has fulfilled all its obligations under the Final Documents of the Review Conferences of 1995 and 2000. With regard to the achievements of 1995, Switzerland stresses that it is essential to respect the principles and objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and would like to highlight the following points, on which a start has been made: first, the ratification, without delay, of the CTBT by the States listed in annex 2 of the Treaty; secondly, the start — as soon as possible — of negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT); and, thirdly, the negotiation of a binding multilateral instrument within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament in order to offer negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT.

The Swiss delegation has submitted to the Conference on Disarmament a working paper (CD/1771) entitled "A Pragmatic Approach to the Verification of a FMCT", drafted by one of our experts, Mr. Bruno Pellaud, a nuclear consultant and former Deputy Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The paper sets out the various aspects and definitions relating to the scope of such a treaty and suggests in particular a realistic approach to verification, aiming at a worldwide cut-off of all production of fissile materials for military purposes.

With this practical conclusion, we underscore our desire to have a fissile material cut-off treaty, without conditions, negotiated as quickly as possible.

Mr. Koshelev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): As President Vladimir Putin stated yesterday, Russia condemns the nuclear test in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Tremendous damage has been inflicted on the process of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We hope that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will return to the negotiating process.

We have repeatedly stressed that such a step, whatever the reasons for it, could only aggravate the problems in the Korean peninsula. It is fraught with danger to peace, security and stability in the region by undermining the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry on this issue demands that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea take immediate steps to return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime and to resume the Six-Party Talks.

Recent developments confirm yet again the importance of nuclear disarmament, and remind us of the need for strict compliance by all States with their international obligations in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as for measures to prevent these deadly weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists.

Russia has ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which provides a solid basis for international cooperation in combating terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Its logical continuation is the initiative by the Presidents of Russia and the United States, namely, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, whose goals are to assist the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004); ensure the certain prosecution of terrorists; improve the accounting control and protection procedures applied to nuclear materials and facilities; and promote cooperation in developing technical means for combating nuclear terrorism.

Another initiative by the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, to establish centres for international nuclear fuel-cycle services, is also highly appreciated by the international community. This initiative provides an alternative to the development of the sensitive elements of the nuclear fuel cycle, namely, the enrichment and reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel. We are ready to work with all other interested countries to finalize and further develop the initiative, with the active involvement of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Russia implements its obligations on the gradual reduction of its nuclear arsenals within the framework of its agreements with the United States, as well as on a unilateral basis. Over recent years this process has acquired additional momentum.

At the last NPT Review Conference, Russia provided concrete information on its nuclear weapons reductions. The aggregate of Russian nuclear weapons stocks is now less than a fifth of what it was in 1991. Russia continues to implement the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms (START) and has reduced its nuclear arsenals much faster than required under the schedule envisaged by the Treaty. Despite the implementation of its obligations ahead of schedule, Russia has pursued the policy of further elimination of strategic offensive weapons. We have proposed to our partners in the United States the launching of a negotiating process, because the current Treaty expires in December 2009.

The Moscow Treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions, together with the Russian-American Joint Declaration on the New Strategic Relationship, is a major step forward in nuclear disarmament and is important for the development of the international security system in the twenty-first century. The Moscow Treaty ensures the continuity of the nuclear disarmament and arms control processes, and is a tangible contribution to implementation by Russia of article VI of the NPT.

Under the Moscow Treaty, by the end of 2012 Russia and the United States must additionally reduce the stocks of their strategic nuclear warheads to approximately one third of the levels set by START for the end of 2001. The President of the Russian Federation has repeatedly stated that Russia is prepared to reduce its nuclear arsenal, on a reciprocal basis, to the level of 1,500 warheads or less.

Russia's non-strategic nuclear arsenal has been reduced to one quarter of its former level and is today located only within the national boundaries at central storage depots of the Ministry of Defence. We believe it is important that, following Russia's example, all non-strategic nuclear weapons and their associated infrastructure be relocated to the territory of States that own them. Our future policy will continue to be guided by the need to ensure the irreversibility of nuclear weapons reductions.

We attach particular importance to the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which Russia has ratified. The Treaty's purpose is to provide a dependable barrier to qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and strengthen the irreversibility of their ongoing reductions. The Treaty is an essential component of the international security system, as well as a crucial factor in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

We welcome Viet Nam's ratification of the Treaty. We hope that the remaining 10 States on the list of 44 will take the necessary steps to adhere to the Treaty as soon as possible. It is also important, in the interim, to continue to observe the moratorium on the testing of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosions.

The Russian Federation believes that the establishment of a fissile material cut-off treaty will be an important step in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We have consistently called for an early compromise on a balanced programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament, which would make it possible to resume negotiations on such a treaty. We have taken substantive practical steps towards such a compromise.

We welcome the signing on 8 September 2006 of the Treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, an important event in the field of nuclear non-proliferation that also strengthens the NPT regime.

Russia has demonstrated by deeds its commitment to its obligations under the NPT. We believe in strict compliance with, and the strengthening of, that crucially important Treaty. We also continue to believe that all challenges and threats to the non-proliferation regime can and must be resolved on the basis of the NPT.

We call upon all States to strictly comply with their commitments under their IAEA Safeguards Agreements, and to develop effective measures aimed at preventing the illicit trade in nuclear equipment, technology and materials. We have consistently called for strengthening the IAEA safeguards system and for the universalization of the additional protocol on the application of safeguards, which would enable the Agency to monitor the use of nuclear materials and equipment for strictly peaceful purposes and to guarantee transparency in national nuclear programmes.

Russia has developed and implemented a national scientific and technological support programme for the Agency's safeguards. In the context of the IAEA Plan of Activities to Protect Against Nuclear Terrorism,

Russia is working with the United States to carry out a project to address the problem posed by dangerous radioactive sources.

It is important to bear in mind that reductions by nuclear-weapon States in the number of nuclear weapons do not occur in a vacuum. The prospects for reducing the number of nuclear weapons, and the process itself, are closely linked with the implementation of key agreements in the areas of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. They are of course also influenced by increased funding for military preparedness in a number of countries, as well as by the emergence of new weapons systems, including antiballistic missile defence systems.

There is no doubt that the deployment of weapons in outer space would be a serious destabilizing factor with grave consequences for the entire process of disarmament, arms control and international security.

In general, we believe that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is possible, but that it can be achieved only through gradual progress, without artificial haste and on the basis of a comprehensive approach that includes all nuclear-weapon States. Of course, strategic stability must also be maintained, and the principle of equal security for all must be respected. We shall be guided by just such an approach in determining our position on draft resolutions concerning nuclear weapons. As in previous years, we shall support realistic and balanced ideas and proposals in that regard.

Mr. Chang Dong-hee (Republic of Korea): At the outset of our thematic debate, Madam, let me extend to you my delegation's compliments on your excellent guidance of the Committee. I assure you of my delegation's full support.

Last year, the international community witnessed two significant failures in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation: neither the seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) nor the World Summit was able to produce any substantive outcome in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The long-anticipated Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in July, also failed to produce a final document, putting the whole disarmament regime into disarray. As the Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction rightly pointed out in its report, "Weapons of Terror", at page 22, it is time for us to renew our cooperation and breathe new life into the international machinery for disarmament and non-proliferation.

Nuclear disarmament is vitally important to lasting international peace and security. Although we acknowledge the significance of the progress that nuclear-weapon States have made thus far in reducing nuclear arsenals, progress that includes the Moscow Treaty, there remains a wide gap between what non-nuclear-weapon States had hoped for and what nuclear-weapon States have actually achieved. Closing that gap is crucial to restoring trust and a more cooperative spirit between the nuclear haves and the nuclear have-nots. My delegation therefore calls upon all nuclear-weapon States to implement their NPT article VI obligations in good faith by carrying out the 13 practical steps contained in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

In the meantime, to relieve the security concerns of non-nuclear-weapon States, we believe nuclear-weapon States should grant strong and credible security assurances to NPT States parties that are in full compliance with the Treaty and other safeguards obligations. It must be absolutely clear to all States that the path to security and stability is not nuclear weapons, but disarmament and compliance with international obligations and norms.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) are two essential means of complementing and strengthening the NPT regime. By placing qualitative and quantitative caps on the development of nuclear weapons, bringing these Treaties into force would be a major step towards our ultimate goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The CTBT's early entry into force is paramount for the eventual elimination of nuclear arsenals. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Treaty's opening for signature, yet the prospect of its entry into force in the near future remains bleak. We have been sitting on this egg for a decade, and it is now time it hatched and took wing. My delegation strongly calls upon those States that have not yet ratified the Treaty, in particular the remaining 10 annex 2 States, to do so without further delay.

The next logical step following the CTBT is an FMCT, the early conclusion of which we cannot over-emphasize. In this regard, we highly appreciate the United States proposed draft mandate and treaty, tabled last May, which we believe provide us with a solid basis for starting negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. In the meantime, considering the urgent need to curb the production of fissile materials, we urge all States with nuclear capabilities to declare voluntary moratoriums on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes without delay. This would certainly be conducive to enhancing transparency and building confidence among States.

Despite the setbacks and challenges that confront it, the NPT remains the cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. As such, it should be further strengthened. In addition to continuing to work to ensure universal adherence to the NPT, we should also strive towards universal application of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) additional protocol, whose universal application would undoubtedly enhance global confidence in the NPT regime itself by bolstering its monitoring and verification mechanisms. As we embark next year on the preparatory process for the eighth Review Conference, we should strive to make the NPT function more effectively so that it can stand up to the challenges before us.

In spite of the nuclear non-proliferation efforts of the international community, North-East Asia unfortunately remains the locus of a pressing nuclear issue. To our great dismay, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced on 9 October that it had conducted a test of a nuclear weapon. The Government of the Republic of Korea strongly condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's act as a serious threat to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and throughout North-East Asia. The nuclear test also constitutes a flagrant violation of the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005, Security Council resolution 1695 (2006) of 15 July and the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula of 1991. My delegation reminds the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that such a provocative act will not be condoned or tolerated. We again urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon immediately all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, to faithfully abide by the NPT regime, and, finally, to behave as a responsible member of the international community.

Mr. Zarka (Israel): I cannot but start with the latest, regrettable developments on the Korean peninsula. Israel joins others in the international community in condemning North Korea's nuclear test. This test is, in our opinion, an irresponsible and provocative act that poses a serious threat not only to the regional stability of North-East Asia, but also to global and international security. Israel reiterates its call to continue the moratorium on nuclear testing and expects North Korea to refrain from any action that could worsen the situation. Israel renews its calls on the international community to firmly see to the implementation of Security Council resolutions adopted to deal with the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Israel has long advocated global and complete disarmament in the spirit of its prophets, articulated in the vision:

> "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid" (*Holy Bible, Micah 4, 3-4*).

To this day, Israel remains committed to a vision of the Middle East developing into a zone free of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, as well as ballistic missiles. Yet we are also realistic enough to know that, in the current realities of the Middle East, this noble vision will not materialize any time soon. As has been the case in virtually every other region, such a vision cannot be pursued out of context. A nuclear-weapon-free zone can emerge only as an outgrowth of a fundamental transformation of the regional political-strategic climate, through a gradual process of building mutual trust and reconciliation, followed by more modest arms control measures.

Given the global state of disarmament, we need in the interim to address other important developments. In our view, it is rather obvious that the rising global energy demand, coupled with an acute need for ever growing use of non-polluting energy sources, requires us to make nuclear power abundantly available. This can be done only if nuclear power can be made at once safe, reliable, and proliferation-resistant. The desire to

allow for a wider use of nuclear power needs to be balanced with the necessity to limit the spread of sensitive nuclear technology. This is especially urgent in light of the growing threats and challenges to the non-proliferation regime and some States' poor track record of compliance with nuclear non-proliferation obligations and norms in the past decade.

Given the inherently dual nature of nuclear fuel cycle technology, we need to consider the attributes of States possessing such technology and their willingness to shoulder the heavy burden of responsibility as well as accountability to internationally promulgated norms in the non-proliferation and nuclear security domain. Above all, States that threaten others, support terrorism or deny the right of other States to exist cannot be trusted with this sensitive technology.

Conversely, we in Israel recognize the special responsibility we shoulder. We have been engaged in a concerted effort to bring ourselves formally closer, wherever possible, to international norms on nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation. We have also stepped up our efforts to help shape and promote new norms in these domains, hoping that these will, in turn, also favourably impact on our region.

Permit me to highlight just a few of our more recent undertakings in these areas. An intense inter-agency effort over several years has brought Israel into full adherence with the Nuclear Suppliers Group guidelines, as recognized by the Group during its last plenary meeting in Brasilia. Israel has complemented its export control effort with support for, and active participation in, the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Our nuclear security efforts have further expanded to endorse and actively support the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. In this vein, Israel, like others, has submitted a report on its implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Furthermore, we welcomed Security Council resolution 1673 (2006) extending the mandate of the 1540 Committee in promoting the full implementation of the resolution.

Israel has endorsed and launched the ratification process of the upgraded Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) as well as the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. In addition, we have supported all along and are implementing the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, as well as the Agency's Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors. In cooperation with the United States Department of Energy, we are stepping up the security of our international border crossings in order to prevent illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological materials.

Our broader effort includes, in the context of the IAEA Safety Standards Commission, further development of the national and global standards for stringent nuclear security measures. One of the areas recognized as warranting high priority is the transport, storage and waste management of radioactive sources.

Even more broadly, Israel not only remains formally committed to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), but also actively supports and participates in the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). We look forward to finalizing the preparations for the Organization and having it fully ready for entry into force. We also sincerely hope that enough support can be marshalled to draw on some of the non-proliferation and other benefits its existence offers, even in its current transitional state, and support the commitment by all States parties to the Treaty, pending its entry into force, not to conduct nuclear test explosions, in line with the Treaty's basic obligations.

Finally, notwithstanding our limited size and resources, our vested interest in the success of the non-proliferation regime has propelled us to search for ways to support the development by others of safe, reliable and proliferation-resistant nuclear power technology; to work to enhance the efficiency of safeguards measures and technology; and to promote new international norms governing dissemination of new fuel-cycle facilities. It is our strong belief that arrangements such as nuclear fuel lease/take-back, credible supply assurances and international spent fuel storage options should be studied and developed as the highest priority.

Mr. Meyer (Canada): These are challenging times for nuclear non-proliferation arms control and disarmament, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in particular. We can all agree that we have not made the progress we had hoped. Some have even questioned whether the entire multilateral nuclear non-proliferation disarmament infrastructure is losing its relevance and thus its effectiveness. However, the principles underlying the NPT as well as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and

other international instruments are just as relevant in today's world as they ever have been.

North Korea's irresponsible and dangerous act of announcing that it has conducted the testing of a nuclear explosive device demonstrates vividly the vital requirement to preserve and further strengthen the existing nuclear non-proliferation arms control and disarmament regime. Canada believes that the NPT must continue to serve as the cornerstone of this regime. The alternative to a strong non-proliferation arms control and disarmament regime, anchored by the NPT, is inevitable, unconstrained growth in the number of nuclear-weapon States. Now is not the time for despair or resigned passiveness. Canada believes that the power and authority of the NPT needs to be reinforced rapidly in the face of these real-world challenges.

As for individual States themselves, they must work to ensure that policies, pronouncements and actions continue to be compatible with a progressive and consistent movement towards nuclear disarmament. There is a role for both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States in this regard. There have been some steps forward. A number of nuclear-weapon States have made significant and welcome progress in reducing their nuclear arsenals.

However, there continue to be worrying signs, as States demonstrate increased reluctance to consider further reductions, new doctrines are mooted which would assert a role for nuclear weapons as war-fighting tools, and plans for new nuclear weapons are discussed. These developments directly challenge our nuclear disarmament efforts. We encourage all States possessing nuclear weapons to continue to reduce and dismantle them in a secure, irreversible and verifiable manner. The role of confidence- and security-building measures in contributing to this process should also not be overlooked.

The CTBT remains a key piece of unfinished business in the nuclear weapons file. We need to encourage the last 10 annex 2 states to sign or ratify the Treaty and join the 176 signatories that wish to put a definitive end to nuclear- weapon testing. Existing moratoriums on nuclear tests are welcome signs of restraint, but they can be terminated with a press release.

Yesterday's announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea underlines the necessity for a universal, legally-binding and permanent international ban on all nuclear test explosions. Political declarations of intent can be encouraging, but are not enough in themselves. There are no substitutes for a legally binding compact. Canada was pleased to join with other "Friends of the CTBT" here last month to direct political attention to the need to put into place this crucial support beam for the nuclear non-proliferation edifice. In an effort to make further progress in universalizing the Treaty, Canada and Mexico will co-host a regional workshop in Mexico City later this week on the implementation of the Treaty in the Greater Caribbean. States should also continue to support the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's International Monitoring System, which is unique in its capability as a global, real-time verification mechanism.

From Canada's perspective, the next milestone on the path to nuclear disarmament is a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). Other efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons will be reinforced once the actual production of fissile materials for weapons is ended. We must build on the positive momentum demonstrated this year in the Conference on Disarmament on the FMCT. In this regard, Canada will introduce in this Committee a draft resolution calling for the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT. There is broad support, and the timing is right. The time to act is now.

Mr. Luaces (United States): The United States believes strongly that achieving a legally binding ban on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons is a desirable goal. One way to accomplish it would be through the negotiation at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We aim to conclude a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) as soon as possible.

The United States has given considerable thought to what an FMCT should look like. The draft treaty that we put forward in Geneva on 18 May, copies of which are available here, sets forth the essentials of a fissile material cut-off treaty that would meet the objective of ending expeditiously the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. The basic obligation under such a treaty, effective at entry into force, would be a ban on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Stocks of existing fissile material would be unaffected by the treaty. The production of fissile material for non-explosive purposes, such as fuel for naval propulsion, also would be unaffected by the treaty.

The definitions set forth in the United States draft treaty of "fissile material" and "production" represent the outgrowth of the decade-long international discussion regarding what an FMCT should encompass. We believe that the definitions in that text are appropriate for the purposes of a cut-off treaty without any provision for verification.

The United States draft treaty omits verification provisions, consistent with the United States position that so-called effective verification of a fissile material cut-off treaty cannot be achieved. The ability to determine compliance with a high level of confidence is a requirement for effective verification. The United States has concluded that, even with extensive verification mechanisms and provisions — so extensive that they could compromise the core national security interests of key signatories, and so costly that many countries would be hesitant to implement them — we still would not have high confidence in our ability to monitor compliance with a cut-off treaty.

Furthermore, mechanisms and provisions that provide the appearance of effective verification without supplying its reality could be more dangerous than having no explicit provisions for verification. Such mechanisms and provisions could provide a false sense of security, encouraging countries to assume that, because they existed, there would be no need for Governments themselves, individually or collectively, to be wary and vigilant against possible violations.

Negotiating an international ban on the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons will be a difficult enough task, in and of itself. Avoiding time-consuming and, we believe, futile efforts to negotiate so-called effective verification measures will expedite action by the Conference on Disarmament to conclude a legally binding ban on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The United States believes that only by focusing on realistic objectives can the Conference on Disarmament create the conditions necessary for negotiating a fissile material cut-off treaty. The successful negotiation of an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament will be both a significant contribution to the global non-proliferation regime and an example of truly effective multilateralism.

The United States hopes that negotiations in Geneva on an FMCT can begin and conclude in the very near future. We also reiterate our view that, pending the conclusion of a cut-off treaty and its entry into force, all States should declare publicly — and observe — a moratorium on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons, such as the United States has maintained since 1988.

Ms. Millar (Australia): This debate on nuclear issues takes place at a crucial time. North Korea's announcement that it conducted a nuclear test on 9 October is a grave threat to international peace and security, particularly for North-East Asia.

North Korea's actions are unacceptable, and Australia condemns them unreservedly and in the strongest possible terms. This provocation will only serve to raise tensions on the Korean peninsula. It is totally at odds with Pyongyang's oft-stated claim that it seeks a denuclearized Korean peninsula, and sets back efforts to resolve peacefully the threat to peace and stability posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons programme.

North Korea should abandon its nuclear weapons and its nuclear weapons programmes, return immediately and unconditionally to the Six-Party Talks and honour and implement its commitment under the September 2005 Joint Statement to return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards at an early date. Australia calls upon the international community to support a unified and strong response to North Korea's actions, and to encourage North Korea to become a responsible member of the international community.

North Korea's actions underscore the urgent need for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Australia takes great pride in introducing the CTBT draft resolution in this the tenth anniversary of the treaty's opening for signature. Australia led international action to bring the CTBT to the United Nations, where it was adopted by an overwhelming majority of States in 1996. Since then, the Treaty has established a norm against nuclear testing, but still further signings and ratifications are required to lock in this norm for all time.

The central message of this year's draft resolution is to urge all States to sign and ratify the Treaty, in particular those States whose ratification is required for its entry into force. We urge maintenance of test moratoriums, and call on all States to refrain from actions that would defeat the objective of the Treaty.

The draft resolution also reaffirms the vital need to continue work on building the verification regime that will enable verification of compliance with the Treaty. Australia urges all States to support the CTBT draft resolution.

The lack of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) remains a significant shortcoming in the international community's nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. It is difficult to conceive of lasting nuclear disarmament without the assurance that States will not revert to fissile material production for weapons purposes. Thus a key objective of all States committed to the goal of nuclear disarmament should be to conclude a treaty that secures the commitment of States parties to end fissile material production for nuclear weapons.

Australia shares the frustration of many over the lack of progress toward a fissile material cut-off treaty within the Conference on Disarmament over the past few years. For this reason, we were greatly encouraged by the thematic debate on a cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament in May this year. It was clear from the debate that support for an FMCT is strong. Of particular significance was the tabling of a draft treaty and negotiating mandate by the United States. As a supporter of an FMCT that provides for appropriate measures to verify compliance, Australia considers that the draft United States mandate provides a basis for moving forward to negotiation of such a treaty. Moreover, the mandate is without prejudice to work that may be undertaken on other issues on the Conference on Disarmament's agenda.

Accordingly, Australia urges States to redouble efforts to find a pragmatic solution to the impasse that has beset the Conference on Disarmament for a decade, thereby building on the encouraging progress made under this year's six Presidents' initiative.

Mr. Da Rocha Paranhos (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am taking the floor on behalf of the member States of MERCOSUR — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela — and the associated States, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

As States that have renounced the nuclear option and have solid credentials in the area of non-proliferation, we continue to actively promote strict compliance with all the obligations set out in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In that context, we reiterate the need to honour the commitments made at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences of the parties to the NPT, particularly the 13 practical steps agreed in 2000.

The States members of MERCOSUR and the associated States regret the lack of substantive results at the 2005 Review Conference and the absence of any reference to the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation in the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit. That lack of results is yet another disturbing sign indicating a process of reinterpreting the Treaty. Ideas or proposals to that end are unacceptable and contrary to the letter and the spirit of the NPT. It is essential to maintain the balance between rights and obligations underpinning it.

It should be recalled that the NPT is based on the conviction that a world free from nuclear weapons is a safer and better world for our generation and future generations, a world in which no one — neither States nor non-State actors — has the chance to use the destructive power of such weapons. A multilateral, transparent, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament process is essential if we are to prevent the dangers of nuclear proliferation. In that connection, we emphasize the need to comply with the disarmament obligations set out in article VI of the NPT.

The task of totally eliminating nuclear weapons must be based on a systematic approach that includes the components of disarmament, verification, assistance and cooperation. Our delegations believe it is essential to ensure balanced implementation of the NPT, whose effectiveness depends on scrupulous compliance with its three pillars. In that connection, we highlight the imperative need to protect the right to engage in research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, as well as the right to transfer material, equipment and scientific information for such purposes, which are guaranteed by article IV of the Treaty.

The NPT is at a critical juncture. Given the threats to international peace and security resulting from the possession of nuclear weapons and the risk of the proliferation of those devices and other nuclear material, we cannot afford a string of failures in our efforts to address the issues that are preventing full implementation of the Treaty. We highlight the importance of the review cycle that will begin next year, and urge States parties to do their utmost to ensure a positive outcome of that exercise.

Our subregion was the first whose members formally acceded to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). That fact demonstrates our countries' historic commitment to improving the mechanisms and instruments for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The CTBT is an instrument of particular importance in the field of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. As an integral aspect of the commitments that permitted the indefinite extension of the NTP in 1995, implementation of the CTBT would free the world of nuclear testing, thus contributing to the systematic and progressive reduction of nuclear weapons and helping to prevent and combat nuclear proliferation.

While we have made significant progress in ensuring the Treaty's entry into force, we cannot rest until that task is complete. We urge the countries listed in annex 2 of the Treaty — particularly the two nuclear-weapon States and those countries remaining outside the non-proliferation regime — to urgently take the measures necessary to join the rest of the international community in its efforts to permanently prohibit nuclear testing. In addition, we invite the Provisional Technical Secretariat to continue, with the support of interested countries, to seek solutions to the difficulties encountered by those countries that wish to ratify the Treaty but face technical constraints.

The member States of MERCOSUR and the associated States, while affirming their unwavering commitment to the objectives of the CTBT, express their firm support for maintaining the moratorium on nuclear testing until the Treaty can enter into force.

The countries of MERCOSUR and the associated countries are part of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in an inhabited area of the world, established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean — the Treaty of Tlatelolco. February 2007 will mark the fortieth anniversary of its adoption.

Today, there are six inhabited nuclear-weapon-free zones in the world. We congratulate Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan on the signing in September this year of the Treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, the first in the Northern Hemisphere. With the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba and Antarctica, we are very close to ensuring that the entire Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas will become a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We welcome and support the efforts of the States parties to those Treaties and of Mongolia to attain that objective. Furthermore, we call on all interested States to continue their efforts to assist the States that have not yet done so to accede to the protocols of the Treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones. We are convinced that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is a particularly relevant component of the efforts to achieve disarmament and non-proliferation. Therefore, the countries of MERCOSUR and the associated countries will remain firmly committed to the quest for a Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas free from nuclear weapons.

Mr. Khan (Pakistan): We welcome the statement you made yesterday, Madam Chairperson, on the North Korean nuclear test.

Pakistan deplores the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it has conducted a nuclear test. That is a destabilizing development for the region. We had urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to desist from introducing nuclear weapons in the Korean peninsula. It is regrettable that it chose to ignore the advice of the international community not to test a nuclear-weapon device.

Pakistan has consistently supported the Six-Party Talks. We believe this mechanism should have been used to address North Korea's concerns. We hope that all the countries in the region will exercise restraint.

The sheer number of nuclear weapons — about 27,000 — their lethality and the lack of exact estimates about the existing stocks of fissile material pose the most serious threats to peace and security. Vertical proliferation, or improvement in nuclear weapon systems, has a demonstration effect and engenders new

uncertainties and instabilities. It also stimulates newer strategic competitions.

In the case of suspected or alleged non-compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the best course is diplomacy, not war. Motivation to acquire weapons of mass destruction can be lowered by addressing the root causes. Intimidation, coercion or wars are not effective responses to such situations.

Under-Secretary-General Tanaka has rightly pointed out that the subtle, or not so subtle, blame game, or a litany of failures in the recent past, is not the answer. We should look at the existing and emerging threats and try to understand their correlation in an objective setting. The global security architecture is in flux. The consensus dating back to the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and one that seemed to be developing in the post-cold-war period, is not holding well.

The prevalent divergent security interests have led to what we may call a strategic pause. Strategic pause is one thing; it is now turning into a strategic vacuum, which is dangerous for peace and stability, especially in regions of tension. The consensus underpinning disarmament and non-proliferation has eroded, and the multilateral disarmament machinery has atrophied. This opens the door for unilateral and discriminatory approaches.

We have proposed the convening of an international conference to develop a new consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation. The original bargain on complete disarmament, non-proliferation and facilitation of peaceful uses of nuclear energy through exchanges has to be revalidated.

Our quest for a new consensus should be guided by the principle of equal security for all States and sustained by multilateralism, not by some self-selected, even if well- meaning, groups of countries. Discrimination and asymmetric possession of weapons of mass destruction will not ensure non-proliferation or regional or global stability. Nor are technology constraints a durable answer, unless the motives for proliferation are addressed. A new security consensus should take into account the need to address existing and emerging global challenges to regional and international security.

We need to agree to revive the process of disarmament and non-proliferation, while evolving a universally agreed basis for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under globally agreed conditions. A fissile material treaty should be tied to the twin objectives of non-proliferation and disarmament. Prevention of the vertical and horizontal spread of nuclear-weapon technology will ensure non-proliferation; cuts into existing stocks will move disarmament forward.

A comprehensive and balanced programme of work on the four core issues — nuclear disarmament, a fissile material treaty, prevention of an arms race in outer space, and negative security assurances, as envisaged in The Five Ambassadors' Initiative, also known as the A5 Proposal — should not hamper, but, rather, facilitate our work. The A5 Proposal distilled all the proposals on the table. This is the minimum threshold we have. If we want to commence work, we can do so within these parameters, without preconditions.

To be credible and effective, a fissile material treaty must be verifiable, and it should take into account the existing stocks. A fissile material treaty without verification would amount to a unilateral moratorium, which we will not be able to accept.

Similarly, one can only presume that, over time, fissile material stocks will be transformed into nuclear weapons. A fissile material treaty, which freezes or accentuates asymmetries, will accelerate, not arrest, proliferation.

It is therefore important that a fissile material treaty provide a schedule for a progressive transfer of existing stockpiles to civilian use and place them under safeguards, so that the unsafeguarded stocks are equalized at the lowest possible level. In order to have full effect, it ought also to be accompanied by a mandatory programme for the elimination of asymmetries in the possession of fissile material stockpiles by various States.

Some delegations say that these issues are preconditions. We are of the view that insistence on dropping agreed bases for negotiations is a precondition. There are agreed principles that underlie the discourse on the fissile material treaty. The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament called for a ban on fissile material as part of the intertwined objectives of nuclear disarmament

and non-proliferation. In 1993 the General Assembly upheld this principle, as did the NPT Review Conferences in 1995 and 2000. The objective has been to draft a fissile material treaty that will strengthen the security of all States, irrespective of their size and status.

The Shannon mandate of 1995 reflected consensus on two bases for a fissile material treaty: first, an agreement to begin negotiations on a universal, non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and, secondly, the open, non-limiting scope of negotiations captured in the affirmation that the mandate for the establishment of an ad hoc Committee does not preclude delegations from raising for consideration the issues of past and future production, as well as management of the fissile material. This is not a precondition, but a built-in latitude to raise any issue — cut-off, existing stocks, management and verifiability.

The so-called linkages between different issues are not extrinsic, but intrinsic, to the collectively agreed bargains. Two assumptions must be addressed in this context. The four core issues are of post-cold-war, twenty-first century, contemporary vintage. It is not correct to contend that the time is ripe for a fissile material treaty, but not for other issues. There is sufficient legal, technical and political basis for movement on all four issues. They will all qualify on grounds of contemporaneity and ripeness. Of course, when negotiations start, it is conceivable that each issue will be of varying pace and progress, but none of the items on the table can be removed from the Conference on Disarmament agenda at will.

In 1968, at the time of the adoption of the NPT, it was understood that non-nuclear-weapon States would seek legally binding negative security assurances. It is no coincidence that Security Council resolutions 255 (1968) and 984 (1995) were adopted to facilitate the NPT and its extension. The Conference on Disarmament, which has negative security assurances on its agenda, should start work early next year to draft a universal, multilateral treaty to assure non-nuclear States against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons. No issue is riper for negotiations than the negative security assurances. It has been on the front burner of the NPT regime since 1968 and on the Conference on Disarmament agenda since its inception. By elaborating and codifying unconditional negative security assurances, the Conference on Disarmament would help create a climate of confidence between nuclear- and non-nuclear- weapon States in the present tense international environment.

Some well-meaning representatives say that we should raise all these issues when the actual negotiations commence. Of course, we will do that. But one has to be sure what is sacrosanct and what is not. At one point, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was considered to be the most important measure for disarmament and non-proliferation. It has become the victim of its principal sponsors.

The Shannon mandate was agreed, and now there are suggestions that it be shelved. Verification was a goal, and now non-verification is the objective for some delegations. If goal posts are constantly moved, it is difficult to define the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Again, some equally well-meaning representatives have been suggesting majority principle as a working method in the Conference on Disarmament. Because of the long impasse, this may be quite tempting, but let me underline that, on issues related to collective security, consensus is a good device for decision-making. It also provides a sound basis for universal adherence and compliance. If we tinker with the principle of consensus in the Conference on Disarmament, we will have an interminable and unproductive discussion, even on this subject.

We should also give attention to reconciling nuclear reality within the global non-proliferation regime. Ways should be explored to normalize the relationship between the NPT and non-NPT nuclear-weapon States. For quite some time it has been suggested that the NPT could develop an additional protocol to resolve this issue.

Although Pakistan subscribes to the objectives of the NPT, it is a nuclear-weapon State. We are already fulfilling the NPT's non-proliferation norms. Pakistan is prepared to continue to act in consonance with the obligations undertaken by nuclear-weapon States under articles I, II and III of the NPT. But we cannot be expected to adhere to the Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State. We are observing a unilateral moratorium on further nuclear tests, but we cannot

agree to a moratorium on the production of fissile material, even as others are being aided in ways that will vastly expand their fissile material stocks.

It is being posited that, over time, nuclear power will supplement fossil fuels and gas globally. If that is the case, it is important that we evolve an agreed basis for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, on a non-discriminatory basis and under appropriate international safeguards, in accordance with the international obligations of States.

Pakistan supports efforts to expand nuclear cooperation for civilian uses, while taking into account safety and security aspects and addressing the proliferation concerns. Pakistan has a legitimate requirement for nuclear power generation to meet the energy needs of our expanding economy. We will continue to develop nuclear power generation under strict IAEA safeguards.

The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) is considering new demands for exceptionalism. We trust that the NSG will adopt a non-discriminatory, criteria-based approach that will, on the one hand, arrest horizontal or vertical proliferation, and on the other, offer equal opportunities for access to civilian nuclear technology under IAEA safeguards.

We are assessing the impact of recent developments on fissile material production in our region. This could impact our position on the fissile material treaty.

The international community and the NSG should also build firewalls that should prevent the spillover of nuclear technology, obtained for peaceful purposes, into military applications.

Under its overarching concept of "Strategic Restraint Regime", Pakistan has been pursuing with India a negotiated settlement of the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, nuclear and missile restraint and a balance in conventional forces. Pakistan does not want to enter into a strategic and conventional arms race, but we will do whatever is necessary to preserve the credibility of our minimum defensive deterrence level.

We have been holding consultations with our Indian counterparts on security concepts and doctrines to develop confidence-building measures in the areas of communication, risk reduction and strategic stability. The two sides have signed an agreement on pre-notification of flight-testing of ballistic missiles, and have operationalized a hotline link between the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries. We have also held discussions on a draft text of an agreement on reducing the risk from accidents relating to nuclear weapons.

Mr. Trezza (Italy): During the general debate several delegations referred to the so-called cooperative threat reduction initiative and its relevance as an arms control and disarmament instrument. In particular, the delegations of New Zealand and the United States informed the First Committee of the efforts made by their countries in this field. In its general statement, as well as in its statement today, which we fully share, the Presidency of the European Union mentioned this argument on behalf of the 39 countries that have subscribed to those statements. The delegation of Italy has already drawn attention to this initiative in other disarmament and non-proliferation forums, such as the Conference on Disarmament and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference, as well as in previous First Committee meetings.

In May 2005 the European Union presented to a plenary meeting of the NPT Review Conference a working paper entitled "European Union Common approach, Cooperative Threat Reduction — Global Partnership Initiative" (NPT/Conf.2005/WP37) which is on the record of that Conference. The cooperative threat reduction initiative has been the object of many international seminars, some organized by my country.

I wish to remind the Committee what the cooperative threat reduction initiative is about and why it is relevant to disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear disarmament. The initiative, one of the most significant developments in the past few years in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, involves a growing number of countries. It has been widely debated in the Group of Eight and the European Union, and has received great attention from disarmament scholars. It was originally developed in the early 1990s. It refers to the process of international cooperation and assistance, through which a large number of nuclear warheads and carriers have been destroyed or deactivated, and weapons of mass destruction materials have been eliminated or placed in safe storage.

The cooperative threat reduction initiative is particularly relevant to nuclear disarmament, which is

why I make this presentation under that cluster. But it also concerns other weapons of mass destruction: chemical, biological and radiological. The implementation of disarmament engagements has brought to the attention of the international community the fact that these engagements, be they multilateral, plurilateral or unilateral, are meaningless unless the weapons involved are either physically destroyed or appropriately disposed of. During past years the enormous technical and financial problems connected with the actual elimination of armaments, both conventional and non-conventional, have also come to the surface; the initiative is a multilateral effort aimed at addressing those problems.

The culminating moment of the initiative took place in Kananaskis, Canada, in June 2002, when the leaders of the G8 announced a Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Participants at the Summit pledged to raise up to $20 billion over the following 10 years to address these threats and, in particular, to "prevent terrorists, or those who harbour them, from acquiring or developing nuclear, chemical, radiological and biological weapons; missiles; and related materials, equipment and technology". In addition to these important financial pledges, the G8 leaders also agreed on a comprehensive set of non-proliferation principles, as well as on guidelines for implementation.

Since 2002 the Global Partnership has become a large-scale international initiative that has contributed to the enhancement of international security and stability. Fourteen States have now joined it. The initiative is open to further expansion to recipient countries, including those from the Community of Independent States, and donor countries that support the Kananaskis documents.

The G8 commitment to the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction was reaffirmed at the 2006 G8 summit at St Petersburg. The cooperative threat reduction programme has become one of the important instruments of the European strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. A total of €1.6 billion has been indicated as the European Union's total financial engagement.

The essence of our message is that we have not only to face the problem of negotiating and implementing disarmament and non-proliferation agreements, but also to cope with the additional problem of actually destroying the weapons concerned. In some cases this requires international cooperation, although the primary responsibility of countries for destruction and safety should remain unchanged.

Mr. Macedo (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is well known that there are some 30,000 nuclear weapons in the world, of which 25,000 are held by the United States and the Russian Federation. We must also take into account stockpiles of related material. No country in the world can feel safe given the mere existence of such stockpiles, which in themselves constitute a risk for their owners, in particular given the increased possibility that these arms or dangerous materials can fall into the hands of non-State actors.

What justifies these stockpiles when the Cold War is over? Against whom would they be used? Mexico has consistently reiterated its conviction that the security of States depends not on a nuclear deterrent, but, rather, on strengthening multilateral, regional and bilateral institutions and instruments that guarantee the stability we all seek.

We are concerned by the doctrines of the nuclear Powers and their threats to resort to their stockpiles. One recently declared that it might use these weapons to respond to a terrorist attack. Against whom would the attack be directed? How many innocent victims would there be? Would one particular State be held responsible? As indicated in the report of the Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction, these weapons are true instruments of terror.

Once again, we emphasize the indissoluble link between nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We cannot call for nuclear non-proliferation when the declared nuclear Powers not only have not reduced their nuclear stockpiles, but have even developed them further. No strategic doctrine can justify the ongoing development of such weapons.

Equally condemnable is the non-reduction of nuclear stockpiles, in conformity with international agreements. Vertical and horizontal proliferation is occurring, both overtly and covertly. Just as serious is the application of double standards or exception regimes of exception for States that have not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This situation will certainly undermine the moral authority and credibility of the

international community, above all at a time like the present.

In this tense climate, the legitimate demands of the non-nuclear-weapon States take on greater importance, as they call for multilateral forums such as this to consolidate security guarantees through the negotiation of a treaty or protocol on the non-use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States.

The tenth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) coincides, sadly, with the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it has carried out a nuclear test. We share the legitimate concern of countries such as the Republic of Korea and Japan, and express our solidarity with them. Mexico condemns and deplores the carrying out of that nuclear test, confirmed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is contrary to the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. My Government has prepared a statement on this issue, which is available in the Committee.

As pioneers of nuclear-weapon-free zones, we call once again for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Mexico is convinced that the total prohibition of nuclear tests will contribute substantially towards halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their further development. For that reason, we support the entry into force of the CTBT. To that end, from 11 to 13 October, Mexico will hold a seminar promoting ratification of the Treaty in the Caribbean region. The seminar, organized in conjunction with Canada, has the support of the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Organization.

This year we also commemorate the tenth anniversary of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons. In preparing for that commemoration, last November the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean adopted the Declaration of Santiago de Chile, which calls on the General Assembly to consider actions that States should undertake to fulfil their nuclear disarmament obligations under the NPT.

It is timely to recall that in its advisory opinion the International Court of Justice established the obligation of the States concerned not only to pursue negotiations on nuclear disarmament in good faith, but also to conclude those negotiations. A decade has passed, and the States on which that obligation rests, in refusing to honour their international commitments under article VI of the NPT, have created a situation that generates international responsibility.

What would have happened if the nuclear-weapon States had fulfilled their obligations? Let us imagine a world today in which the CTBT is in force, together with a treaty on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, and there are new procedures for bilateral and multilateral negotiation of measures to reduce the nuclear threat, such as lowering the operational status of nuclear weapons launching systems.

In all certainty, the international community would not be standing by helpless in the face of a new nuclear arms race, which places at risk the pact that we all agreed upon in 1968. In all certainty, we would not be so concerned about the possibility of non-State actors gaining access to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In all certainty, the whole body of disarmament treaties would not have been undermined by the calling into question of essential principles, such as verification. And certain States would not have needed to seek assurances in shameful agreements in an attempt to preserve, often in exchange for concessions, a flagging non-proliferation regime. I believe that we all agree that we would be living in a safer world.

Mexico is convinced that never before has there been such a critical need to provide education about disarmament and non-proliferation, as is highlighted in the United Nations study on this issue. Every two years, my country submits a draft resolution on this issue, whose text we are currently circulating.

We believe that action is urgently needed to foster a culture of nuclear disarmament, thereby helping to attain the common objective of freeing future generations from the inhuman and immoral scourge of nuclear weapons.

The Chairperson: I again remind all delegations that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions is 6 p.m. tomorrow, 11 October. Delegations are urged to adhere to that deadline so that the secretariat may process the documents in a timely manner.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.